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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 5 PRAGUE 0797

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AMGT, PFOR, CZ
SUBJECT: ANNUAL POLICY AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENTS: PART I

REFS A. STATE 041169, B. STATE 038356, C. STATE 038338

SUMMARY: EMBASSY PROVIDES ANNUAL POLICY AND RESOURCES ASSESSMENT,
PART I. END SUMMARY.

1. A. US INTERESTS:
OUR PRINCIPAL LONG-TERM INTERESTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA INVOLVE
MAINLY POLITICAL AND SECURITY OBJECTIVES AIMED AT: STRENGTHENING
CZECHOSLOVAK NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE; ERODING SOVIET HEGEMONY AND
MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE CENTER OF EUROPE; AND BUILDING UP
CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER WESTERN
DEMOCRACIES.

2. IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES DESIGNED TO ADVANCE
THESE INTERESTS, US ACTIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA MUST FUNCTION ON
TWO LEVELS. FIRST, THERE IS THE CONTEXT OF OUR RELATIONS WITH
THE USSR AND ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES. CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS GEOGRAPHICALLY
A CENTRAL ELEMENT IN THE BUFFER ZONE WHICH THE SOVIET UNION HAS
BUILT UP TOWARD A PUTATIVE WESTERN THREAT, POLITICALLY A SIGNIFICANT
FOCAL POINT OF DISSIDENT THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY, ECONOMICALLY A
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DESIRABLE MARKET FOR SOVIET EXPORTS AND SOURCE FOR THE SOVIETS
OF URANIUM AND OF MANUFACTURED GOODS, AND MILITARILY A PRIMARY
STAGING AREA FOR POSSIBLE ACTION AGAINST NATO. THESE FACTORS
CAUSE THE USSR TO WISH TO KEEP AN ESPECIALLY TIGHT GRIP ON
CZECHOSLOVAKIA, WHILE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL FACTORS MAKE
CZECHOSLOVAKIA MORE SUBMISSIVE THAN SOME OTHER MEMBERS OF THE
WARSAW PACT. OUR INTEREST AT THIS LEVEL IS TO PROMOTE CONDITIONS

UNDER WHICH THE CZECHOSLOVAKS CAN GAIN A GRADUALLY INCREASING DEGREE OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND ATTEMPT TO SATISFY INTERNAL ASPIRATIONS FOR LIBERALIZATION IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC FIELDS.

3. ON THE OTHER (BILATERAL) LEVEL, OUR INTERESTS ARE IN MAINTAINING HISTORICAL TIES WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA, NOW MAINLY EXPRESSED THROUGH ACTIVITIES OF THE APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION FIRST AND SECOND GENERATION AMERICANS OF CZECH AND SLOVAK DESCENT. WHILE MAINLY STRIVING, OVER THE LONG HAUL, TO CONSTRUCT POLITICAL TIES, UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WE MUST CONCENTRATE OUR EFFORTS ON BUILDING CULTURAL AND INFORMATIONAL RELATIONS AND IN IMPROVING OUR COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS TO REALIZE THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK MARKET.

4. OBVIOUSLY, THERE IS A CONSIDERABLE GAP BETWEEN THESE TWO LEVELS IN THEIR IMPORTANCE TO US. IN RELATION TO OUR BROADER INTERESTS, CZECHOSLOVAKIA CAN DIRECTLY AFFECT PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED PEACE ON THE CONTINENT AND OUR EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN FREEDOM EVERYWHERE IN EUROPE. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT BOTH WORLD WARS OF THIS CENTURY BEGAN IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE, WHICH STILL REMAINS AN AREA OF LATENT UNREST. ON A STRICTLY BILATERAL LEVEL, HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO ARGUE THAT CZECHOSLOVAKIA HOLDS GREAT IMPORTANCE FOR US.

5. B. OVERVIEW, BASIC ENVIRONMENT: THE BASIC FACT IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT IS THAT SINCE WORLD WAR II IT HAS PHYSICALLY BORDERED ON AND BEEN POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY CONFIDENTIAL

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DOMINATED BY THE SOVIET UNION. FOR VARIOUS REASONS IT HAS BEEN, WITH BULGARIA, MOSCOW'S MOST SERVILE AND, EXCEPT FOR 1968-69, LEAST TROUBLESOME ALLY. YET, WE BELIEVE MOST CZECHS CONSIDER THEMSELVES WESTERNERS, AND MANY OF THEM RETAIN A DEEP RESPECT FOR WESTERN VALUES OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY--EVEN IF THEY WILL NOT TAKE TO THE STREETS, LIKE THE POLIES, TO DEFEND THEIR INTERESTS. REQUESTS THAT THESE VALUES BE HONORED FORM THE HEART OF THIS YEAR'S CHARTER 77 HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN PRAGUE. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SLOVAKS REGARD CHARTER 77 AS A CZECH GAMBIT TO WEAKEN THE CURRENT SLOVAK LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY. NONETHELESS CZECHOSLOVAK YEARNING FOR DEMOCRACY AND SELF-DETERMINATION TRADITIONALLY HAS BEEN A PRIME MOTIVATING FORCE BEHIND HISTORIC TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES.

6. DESPITE THE CZECHOSLOVAK PEOPLES' DESIRE FOR FREEDOM, HOWEVER, SINCE WORLD WAR II AND ESPECIALLY SINCE THE SOVIET OUSTER OF DUBCEK IN 1969 THE PARTY-STATE LEADERSHIP IN PRAGUE HAS BEEN UNSTINTINGLY SUPPORTIVE OF MOSCOW'S FOREIGN POLICY LINE. PROSPECTS FOR THE POST-1968 HUSAK REGIME'S CONTINUED SURVIVAL--WHICH WE RATE HIGH--ARE

FIRMLY PINNED ON CONTINUED UNDEVIATING SUPPORT OF THAT LINE AND MAINTENANCE OF THE DOCILE ACQUIESCENCE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK MASSES.

7. CURRENT SITUATION - CRUSHED HOPES: DURING THE PAST YEAR THE ACTIVE FOREIGN POLICY PURSUED BY FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK APPEARED TO HAVE MADE REAL PROGRESS TOWARD ITS POST-1968 GOAL OF ESTABLISHING A RELATIVE INTERNATIONAL RESPECTABILITY FOR THE REGIME. WE HAD, IN FACT, BEGUN TO SPECULATE WHETHER HIS ACTIVISM DID NOT HAVE AS AN EVENTUAL, CAREFULLY CONCEALED, GOAL OBTAINING FOR CZECHOSLOVAKIA SUFFICIENT SUPPORT FROM COUNTRIES IN VARIOUS CAMPS TO GIVE IT SOME ROOM TO MANEUVER--AT LEAST ON INTERNAL QUESTIONS--OUTSIDE STRICT SOVIET GUIDELINES.

8. IMPACT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS: IN BILATERAL US-CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS, 1976 PROVIDED VISIBLE PROGRESS TOWARD THE END OF THE YEAR ON SOME LONGSTANDING ISSUES. THE NEW YEAR, HOWEVER, HAS BROUGHT THE CHARTER 77 ISSUE AND THE REPRESSIVE RESPONSE TO IT BY
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THE HUSAK REGIME. AS A RESULT, CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S HARD-WON INTERNATIONAL RESPECTABILITY HAS PLUMMETED. MOVEMENT ON OUR KEY BILATERAL ISSUES HAS NOTABLY SLACKENED, SINCE THE JANUARY 26 STATEMENT BY THE DEPARTMENT ON THE CHARTER 77 GROUP AND THE GOC PROTEST AGAINST THIS STATEMENT. THE US HAS DECIDED FOR THE TIME BEING NOT TO PROCEED ON BILATERAL ISSUES, UNLESS PROMPT ACHIEVEMENT OF AGREEMENT IS UNMISTAKABLY IN OUR INTEREST. THUS, WE ARE GOING AHEAD TO EXTEND OUR BILATERAL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT GOVERNING PANAM-CSA FLIGHTS, FOR EXAMPLE, BUT SETTING OF A DATE FOR A US VISIT BY DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SPACIL, CONCLUSION OF THE CULTURAL/SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES AGREEMENT AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM, AND ACTION ON SOME LESS IMPORTANT MOVES TO IMPROVE RELATIONS HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED.

9. TO SUM UP, THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT IS UNFAVORABLE FOR STRENGTHENING BILATERAL RELATIONS. THE CHARTER 77 ISSUE (OR SOME VARIANT OF IT) AND THE CONCERN OF THIS ADMINISTRATION FOR

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HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT GOING AWAY. WE SEE NO REASON TO EXPECT BASIC CHANGES IN THE LEADERSHIP, WHICH WOULD BE THE PREREQUISITE FOR ANY GENUINE LIBERALIZATION BY THE CZECHOSLOVAK LEADERSHIP. RATHER, WE ANTICIPATE FRICTION BETWEEN THE USG AND THE HUSAK REGIME OVER HUMAN RIGHTS, AND SUCH RELATED ISSUES AS TREATMENT OF JOURNALISTS,

TO PERSIST INTO THE MONTHS AHEAD--AT LEAST UNTIL THE CONCLUSION OF THE BELGRADE CSCE REVIEW AND PROBABLY BEYOND. AS AN EMBASSY, WE EXPECT THE NEAR FUTURE TO BE AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF COLD WARFARE, IN WHICH THE MOST WE CAN PROBABLY HOPE FOR IS A DAMAGE-LIMITING HOLDING ACTION.

10. ...AND EFFECTS ON MULTILATERAL INTERESTS: IN ADDITION TO CONSTANT CONCERN WITHIN NATO OVER DEVELOPMENTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THE MULTILATERAL FORUM WITH GREATEST APPLICABILITY TO US POLICIES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS CSCE. IT MIGHT WELL BE RECALLED THAT THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE HAD ITS INCEPTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AS A DOCTRINAL JUSTIFICATION FOR ENDING THE "PRAGUE SPRING" LIBERAL REFORM PROGRAM OF DUBCEK AND THAT ONE OF THE WEST'S KEY OBJECTIVES IN THE APPROACH TO CSCE WAS TO UNDERMINE MOSCOW'S PROCLAIMED RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ITS SO-CALLED "SOCIALIST COMMONWEALTH." ANOTHER KEY WESTERN OBJECTIVE WAS TO USE CSCE OVER THE LONG TERM TO STIMULATE AN EAST-WEST "FREER FLOW OF PEOPLE, IDEAS, AND INFORMATION" ACROSS ALL OF EUROPE.
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11. CSCE NONINTERFERENCE PRECEPTS--AS WELL AS THE PRINCIPLE OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS--CAN AND SHOULD BE USED BY THE WEST IN COUNTERING THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE--ESPECIALLY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, WHERE SOVIET INTERFERENCE AND CONTROL REMAIN BASIC FACTS OF LIFE.

12. THE CSCE BASKET 2 AND 3 PROVISIONS-- AIMED AT OPENING UP GREATER EAST-WEST ECONOMIC/SCIENTIFIC TIES, AND EXPANDING COOPERATION ON HUMAN CONTACTS, FLOW OF INFORMATION, AND EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES--ARE BEING USED TO GOOD AVAIL IN ATTEMPTING TO ADVANCE US PROGRAMS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THE HUSAK REGIME PERFORCE COORDINATES ALL SUCH EAST-WEST COOPERATION CLOSELY WITH MOSCOW, HOWEVER, AND GENERALLY GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF

WANTING TO REMAIN A STEP OR TWO BEHIND THE SOVIETS' OWN RECORD OF CSCE FOLLOWUP.

13. WITH RESPECT TO MBFR, CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS ALSO A NOTEWORTHY CASE, SINCE THE DEPLOYMENT OF SOVIET TROOPS INTO THE COUNTRY IN 1968 AND AT THEIR SUBSEQUENT BUILD-UP DIRECTLY AFFECTS THE MILITARY CONFRONTATION OF EAST AND WEST IN EUROPE--WHICH MBFR SEEKS TO BRING TO A LOWER LEVEL. AT THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS IN VIENNA, THE CZECHOSLOVAKS DUTIFULLY ECHO ALL SOVIET POSITIONS AND OFTEN EVEN SEEM TO GO BEYOND MOSCOW'S HARD-LINE VIEWS. THE SOVIET INSTALLATION OF MILITARY FORCES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAS STRENGTHENED THE US CASE THAT AMERICAN MILITARY WITHDRAWALS MUST BE RECIPROCATED BY A SOVIET PULL-BACK FROM THE MIDDLE OF EUROPE.

14. IN CEMA, TOO, THE CZECHOSLOVAKS HAVE APPEARED TO ACCOMODATE THE SOVIETS FULLY IN THEIR INTEGRATION SCHEMES. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES CZECHOSLOVAKIA DOES MORE TO SUPPORT ITS CEMA PARTNERS, THE USSR IN PARTICULAR, THAN VICE VERSA. THE RELATIVELY HIGH STANDARD OF LIVING IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA --WHAT MIGHT BE CALLED "KNEDLIKY (DUMPLING) COMMUNISM) AKIN TO KADAR'S "GOULASH COMMUNISM" --IS MADE POSSIBLE, IN OUR VIEW, BY THE CZECHOSLOVAK'S OWN LABOR, NOT BY SOVIET HELP. INDEED, WE BELIEVE LIVING STANDARDS AND THE STRENGTH OF THE OVERALL ECONOMY WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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MORE IMPRESSIVE THAN NOW, IF THE CZECHOSLOVAKS WERE NOT SO SLAVISH IN EMULATING THE SOVIET ECONOMIC MODEL, WITH ALL THE WASTE, MISMANAGEMENT AND MISALLOCATION OF RESOURCES WHICH THAT ENTAILS. THE UNUSUALLY CLOSE GOC-SOVIET ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP, CENTERED IN CEMA COOPERATION, SUGGESTS THAT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE UNITED STATES TO ACHIEVE DRAMATIC INCREASES IN TRADE WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA OVER THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. HOWEVER, SEVERAL CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIALS HAVE SAID THE GOC WILL DIVERT A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF ITS COSTLY PURCHASES OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AND CAPITAL GOODS FROM OTHER WESTERN SOURCES TO THE U.S. ONCE OUR RELATIONS ARE MORE "NORMAL". IF MFN AND ACCESS TO OFFICIAL US TRADE CREDITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THEM, THE CZECHOSLOVAKS ARE LIKELY TO INDULGE MORE GENEROUSLY THEIR ALMOST INSATIABLE APPETITE FOR U.S. GOODS AND KNOW-HOW.

15. LEADERSHIP STABILITY:

AT PRESENT, SPECULATION HAS INCREASED AMONG DIPLOMATS IN PRAGUE OVER THE ABILITY OF THE HUSAK COLLEGIAL LEADERSHIP TO WEATHER THE CURRENT STORM OVER HUMAN RIGHTS, WITH ITS IMPACT NOT ONLY ON CZECHOSLOVAK INTERNAL PROBLEMS, BUT ALSO ON EUROCOMMUNISM, THE THINKING OF INTELLECTUALS ELSEWHERE IN EASTERN EUROPE, PREPARATIONS FOR THE CSCE BELGRADE MEETING AND, ULTIMATELY, THE FATE OF DETENTE. WE THINK THE DECISIVE FACTOR IN DETERMINING CZECHOSLOVAK LEADERSHIP REMAINS MOSCOW'S CHOICE--BOTH NOW AND AFTER THE EVENTUAL DEMISE OF THE CURRENT SOVIET GERONTOCRACY.

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16. REGIONAL EE CONSIDERATIONS:

FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF PRAGUE, WE BELIEVE US POLICY TOWARD EASTERN EUROPE AS A WHOLE SHOULD BE THE SAME AS WE HAVE DEFINED IT TOWARD CZECHOSLOVAKIA-- VIZ, TO REDUCE SOVIET HEGEMONY IN THE REGION, STRENGTHEN NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE TRENDS, AND PRUDENTLY CONSTRUCT EASTERN EUROPEAN TIES OF ALL KINDS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER WESTERN DEMOCRACIES, INCLUDING JAPAN. WE BELIEVE SOME KIND OF "PECKING ORDER" IS INEVITABLE IN RANKING OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE INDIVIDUAL EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. WE WOULD SIMPLY ASK FOR FLEXIBILITY IN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES TO SPUR NASCENT TRENDS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA TOWARD BOTH INTERNAL LIBERALIZATION AND INCREASED INDEPENDENCE FROM MOSCOW.

17. WE BELIEVE EASTERN EUROPE REMAINS PERVASIVELY RESTLESS, AND VOLATIEL IN THOSE AREAS WHERE NATIONAL TRADITIONS HAVE LED TO RECURRENT POLITICAL EXPLOSIONS, AS IN POLAND, YUGOSLAVIA, AND HUNGARY. CZECHOSLOVAKIA, IN OUR VIEW, DOES NOT FIT THE LATTER CATEGORY; THUS TROUBLE IN POLAND AND YUGOSLAVIA WOULD NOT LIKELY LEAD TO SPONTANEOUS REACTIONS HERE. BUT ALL ACROSS EASTERN EUORPE, WE BELIEVE EVERY NATION, WITH THE SINGLE EXEPTION OF THE BULGARIANS, EXHIBITS PROFOUND DISLIKE FOR THE COMMUNIST SYSTEM AS CREATED AND IMPOSED UPON
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THE AREA BY MOSCOW. THUS, WE FORESEE CONTINUED INSTABILITY AND BELIEVE U.S. TACTICS MUST BE FLEXIBLE AND CAUTIOUS IN ADVANCING OUR LONGTERM GOALS OF GREATER NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM WITHIN EASTERN EUROPE, WHILE MAINTAINING ENOUGH STABILITY DURING THIS EVOLUTION TO PREVENT AN OUTBREAK OF ARMED HOSTILITIES.

18. THE STRONG SOVIET GRIP ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA LEAVES HUSAK WITH THE WORST OF BOTH WORLDS IN EASTERN EUROPE. ROMANIA'S CEAUSESCU HAS ACHIEVED A MEASURE OF EXTERNAL INDEPENDENCE AT THE PRICE OF TOTALITARIAN INTERNAL CONTROLS; KADAR HAS EASED THE LOT OF HIS PEOPLE ON INTERNAL POLICY QUESTIONS, WHILE LENDING TOTAL SUPPORT TO SOVIET FOREIGN POLICIES; BUT HUSAK SUPPORTS MOSCOW COMPLETELY ON ALL FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS AND EMULATES SOVIET INTERNAL PRACTICES AS WELL. HAVING BEEN A POLITICAL PRISONER HIMSELF, HOWEVER, HE DOES CURTAIL INTERNAL REPRESSION SOMEWHAT. WE BELIEVE THAT OVER THE LONG TERM, U.S. POLICIES SHOULD BE GEARED TO ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING THE GRADUAL EVOLUTION OF A SYSTEM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA SIMILAR TO THAT PRESENTLY FUNCTIONING IN HUNGARY.

19. OBJECTIVES, COURSES OF ACTION, AND ISSUES:

THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO SERVE AS THE "EYES AND EARS" OF THE UNITED STATES IN KEEPING POLICY MAKERS INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA WHICH MIGHT AFFECT US NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS. MEANWHILE WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS ON SPECIFIC U.S. OBJECTIVES, LISTED IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PRIORITY, WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION DURING THE PERIOD UNDER CONSIDERATION.

20. CLAIMS GOLD - OUR NUMBER-ONE OBJECTIVE MUST BE THE RESOLUTION OF THE PIVOTAL CLAIMS/GOLD ISSUE. SETTLEMENT OF THIS SINGLE PROBLEM COULD GREATLY IMPROVE THE STATE OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND OPEN THE WAY, AT A MINIMUM, TO A MARGINAL STRENGTHENING OF TIES ACROSS THE BOARD. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN WASHINGTON TO DEVELOP A NEW PROPOSAL FULLY ACCEPTABLE TO KEY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, CONFIDENTIAL

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YET NEGOTIABLE WITH THE CZECHOSLOVAKS. WHILE THE DEPARTMENT HAS TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THE INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS STRUGGLE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA MAKES UNTENABLE A NEW APPROACH TO THE CONGRESS ON ENDING THE CLAIMS/GOLD IMBROGLIO, WE BELIEVE SERIOUS THOUGHT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE POSSIBILITY OF EXPLOITING CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S DESIRE TO OVERCOME ITS INTERNATIONAL PARIAH IMAGE BY MOVING FORWARD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH A NEW PROPOSAL. NOTABLY, IN OTHER NEGOTIATIONS UNDERTAKEN IN THE HEAT OF THE CHARTER 77 DEBATE, THE CZECHOSLOVAKS HAVE DISPLAYED A WILLINGNESS TO REACH AGREEMENTS. THUS, IT MIGHT JUST BE POSSIBLE TO GAIN GOC CONSENT AT

THIS TIME TO SETTLEMENT TERMS THAT PERHAPS EARLIER WOULD HAVE BEEN REJECTED OUT OF HAND. IN ANY CASE, WE BELIEVE FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK, WHO HAS TAKEN A DEEP PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE CLAIMS/GOLD CASE, WOULD GIVE CLOSEST ATTENTION TO ANY NEW FORMAL U.S. PROPOSAL REASONABLY WITHIN RANGE OF WHAT PRAGUE MIGHT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT.

21. --MFN/EX-IM BANK CREDITS-FOLLOWING POSSIBLE EVENTUAL RESOLUTION OF THE CLAIMS/GOLD ISSUE AND WITHIN THE LIMITS OF OTHER STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS(E.G. JACKSON/VANIK), WE COULD MOVE RELATIVELY PROMPTLY TO START NEGOTIATING A BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENT, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE MFN TREATMENT AND ACCESS TO EX-IM CREDITS. WHILE THIS DEVELOPMENT MAY, OR MAY NOT, OCCUR IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS, IN THE MEANTIME CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS STEPPING UP CHARGES OF U.S. TRADE DISCRIMINATION. GOC CLAIMS, INCORRECTLY, THAT CSCE FINAL ACT CALLS FOR EXTENSION OF MFN WHEN IN FACT IT ONLY REFERS TO "BENEFICIAL EFFECTS WHICH CAN RESULT FROM" EXTENSION OF MFN. THESE TACTICS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY INCREASE AT TIME OF THE BELGRADE 77 DELIBERATION. WE BELIEVE THE BEST COURSE TO TAKE IN THIS SITUATION IS SIMPLY TO NOTE THAT SECTION 408 OF THE 1974 US TRADE ACT IS THE LAW OF THE LAND, AND UNTIL A CLAIMS/GOLD SETTLEMENT IS RENEGOTIATED, THERE CAN BE NO PROGRESS ON MFN AND CREDITS. HOWEVER, IF PROGRESS BEGINS TO BE MADE TOWARD A RENEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, THE EMBASSY WOULD HOPE THAT PREPARATORY WORK WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN EARLY ON TO ENSURE RAPID COMMENCEMENT OF NEGOTIATIONS ON A TRADE AGREEMENT, WHEN THE TIME IS CONFIDENTIAL

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22. --HUMAN RIGHTS - OVER THE NEAR TERM, OUR POLICY OBJECTIVE CREATING THE MOST DIFFICULTY FOR OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS OUR CHAMPIONING OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE PROSPECT IS FOR FURTHER DIFFICULTIES, ESPECIALLY IN THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE BELGRADE CSCE PREPARATORY TALKS IN JUNE, SINCE THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IS COMMITTED TO SPEAKING OUT FORTHRIGHTLY ON THESE ISSUES, AND MOSCOW (THUS ALSO PRAGUE) REGARDS THIS A MAJOR IDEOLOGICAL ATTACK. THE EMBASSY WELCOMES CONTINUED US LEADERSHIP ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AND SUGGESTS THAT US TACTICS FEATURE ESPECIALLY STATEMENTS OF PRINCIPLE, LIKE THE JANUARY 26 DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT ON CHARTER 77, RATHER THAN IDENTIFICATION WITH INDIVIDUAL CAUSES.

23. --CONTINUING ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES - WE HAVE BEEN REGISTERING MODEST PROGRESS IN THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL AREA. OUR OBJECTIVES HERE SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE AIMED AT BUILDING TRADE, NURTURING ON-GOING COMMERCIAL CONTACTS AND ACHIEVING WHATEVER BILATERAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS POSSIBLE IN THE ABSENCE OF A BREAKTHROUGH ON CLAIMS/GOLD AND A TRADE AGREEMENT. ACCORDING TO OUR DATA, US EXPORTS IN 1976 TOTALED ALMOST \$150 MILLION OR NEARLY TRIPPLE THE 1975 LEVEL. THIS WAS DUE LARGELY TO HIGHER THAN NORMAL GRAIN SALES CAUSED BY DROUGHT, BUT MANUFACTURED EXPORTS ALSO ROSE BY ONE-THIRD. CZECHOSLOVAK EXPORTS TO THE US REMAINED VIRTUALLY STAGNANT AT ABOUT \$36 MILLION. BARRING ANOTHER
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DROUGHT, WE CAN EXPECT A FALL IN US EXPORTS IN 1977 AND INCREASED GOC PRESSURE FOR LESS IMBALANCE IN THEIR BILATERAL TRADE WITH US. WHEN EVENTUALLY IMPLEMENTED, THE EXCHANGES ACCORD NEGOTIATED IN LATE 1976 WILL INCLUDE PROVISIONS FOR INCREASED SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL TIES, WHICH COULD COMPLEMENT ANY EXPANSION OF COMMERCE BASED ON A TRADE AGREEMENT. AS ONE TANGIBLE STEP TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF OUR ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL TIES WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA, WE HAVE ESTABLISHED A NEW BUSINESS FACILITATION CENTER FOR THE USE OF VISITING BUSINESSMEN IN THE CHANCERY. PROBABLY THE MOST EFFECTIVE TRADE PROMOTION TECHNIQUE AVAILABLE TO US AT PRESENT IS THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE-ORGANIZED TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR. WE RECOMMEND THAT APPROXIMATELY FOUR OR FIVE OF THESE SEMINARS CONTINUE TO BE HELD IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA EVERY YEAR, TOGETHER WITH ANNUAL U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE BRNO ENGINEERING FAIR AND AD HOC PARTICIPATION IN OTHER CZECHOSLOVAK TRADE FAIRS. WE ALSO FAVOR CONTINUATION OF VARIOUS BILATERAL ACCORDS, LIKE THE AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT, WHICH ARE MANIFESTLY BENEFICIAL TO U.S. INTERESTS.

24. --ADVANCING U.S. INFORMATIONAL/CULTURAL PROGRAMS - U.S. CULTURAL/INFORMATIONAL PROGRAMS ALSO PICKED UP STEAM FOR A WHILE IN LATE 1976, WITH INTER ALIA, HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCES BY BENNY GOODMAN, ZUBIN MEHTA AND THE LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA, AND OTHER U.S. ARTISTS. MOREOVER, THE PAO WAS ABLE TO OBTAIN DISCREET APPROVAL FOR INCREASING CIRCULATION OF OUR USIS CZECH-LANGUAGE JOURNAL SPEKTRUM FROM 2,00 TO 6,000. OUR OBJECTIVE IN THIS DOMAIN SHOULD BE TO CONTINUE SUCH CULTURAL AND INFORMATIONAL EFFORTS IN KEEPING WITH OUR LONGTERM GOAL OF STRENGTHENING BILATERAL TIES OF ALL KINDS. THE EMBASSY SEEKS TO MAKE MAXIMUM USE OF BASKET THREE IN THE CSCE FINAL ACT TO STEP UP THE "FREER FLOW OF PEOPLE, IDEAS, AND INFORMATION," BUT CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S ACTUAL PERFORMANCE IN THIS AREA HAS BEEN DECIDEDLY LIMITED. THE EMBASSY WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO RELY ON VOA BOTH TO COUNTER CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA POLEMICS AND TO PRESENT FACTUAL NEWS ABOUT THE U.S. WHATEVER VOA--AND RFE--CAN DO TO ATTRACT POSITIVELY WHAT MIGHT BE TERMED "THE MIDDLE GENERATION" OF TECHNOCRATS, WORKERS, AND PEOPLE IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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25-45 AGE BRACKET IS TO BE ENCOURAGED. OUR SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT EFFORT IN THE PERIOD JUST AHEAD IS TO NEGOTIATE AN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM FOR THE CULTURAL/EDUCATIONAL/SCIENTIFIC/TECHNOLOGICAL EXCHANGES AGREEMENT. IN LIGHT OF CURRENT STRAINS IN US-GOC POLITICAL RELATIONS, WE SEE NO REASON TO BE IN A HURRY TO START THE IMPLEMENTATION TALKS. THE CZECHOSLOVAKS REPEATEDLY TOLD US LAST FALL THAT THEY WOULD REQUIRE "TWO OR THREE MONTHS" FOR A GOVERNMENTAL REVIEW OF THE EXCHANGES ACCORD; SUBSEQUENTLY, THEY HAVE GIVEN US CONTRADICTORY SIGNALS ON HOW MUCH TIME THEY WILL NEED. WE RECOMMEND THAT WE LEAVE IT TO THE CZECHOSLOVAKS TO SIGNAL US WHEN THEY ARE READY TO TALK. THEN, WE CAN TIME THE BEGINNING OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AS WE WISH BY INDICATING WHEN OUR EXPERTS DEALING WITH SUCH MATTERS WILL BE AVAILABLE. THE DEPARTMENT WILL WANT TO DECIDE ON THE TIMING OF SIGNATURE OF THE EXCHANGES ACCORD WITH AT LEAST TWO DEVELOPMENTS IN MIND: THE STATUS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS STRUGGLE AND BELGRADE 77. LOOKING BEYOND EVENTUAL SIGNATURE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXCHANGES ACCORD, WE WOULD EXPECT IT TO PROVIDE A USEFUL FOUNDATION FOR A GRADUAL EXPANSION OF OUR CULTURAL AND INFORMATIONAL PROGRAMS.

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25. --MEDIA POLEMICS - CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S MEDIA ATTACKS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES HAVE REACHED A CRESCENDO RECENTLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EAST-WEST DEBATE OVER HUMAN RIGHTS. THE DEPARTMENT'S JANUARY 26 STATEMENT ON CHARTER 77 PROMPTED A SHARP MFA PROTEST AND CONTINUES TO BE CITED AS A GLARING EXAMPLE OF "INTERFERENCE IN CZECHOSLOVAK INTERNAL AFFAIRS." THE POLEMICAL EXCHANGE OVER HUMAN RIGHTS IS ALSO LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR HARASSMENT OF U.S. JOURNALISTS VISITING CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN RECENT WEEKS. THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS CONTINUED AD HOC PROTESTS AGAINST ESPECIALLY REPREHENSIBLE CASES OF MALTREATMENT OF U.S. JOURNALISTS. SUCH PROTESTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE POSITED ON CSCE PROVISIONS RELATING TO "WORKING CONDITIONS FOR JOURNALISTS" AND ON STATEMENTS DRAWING THE CZECHOSLOVAKS' ATTENTION TO THE ADVERSE IMPACT OF THEIR ACTIONS ON OUR BILATERAL TIES. OVER THE LONG TERM, WE BELIEVE THAT HERE TOO ONLY A SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS/GOLD, WITH ITS CONSEQUENT IMPROVEMENT IN OVERALL US-GOC RELATIONS, CAN BRING AN AMELIOATION OF REPORTAGE ON US EVENTS BY THE CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA.

26. FAMILY REUNIFICATION AND OTHER CONSULAR ISSUES - OUR PRINCIPAL CONSULAR OBJECTIVES INCLUDE STEADY EFFORTS TO: ENCOURAGE CZECHOSLOVAK IMPLEMENTATION OF CSCE PROVISIONS ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION,

FAMILY VISITS, BINATIONAL MARRIAGES AND SIMILAR PROBLEMS;
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MOVE TOWARD GOC RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE US-GOC CONSULAR CONVENTION SIGNED IN 1973; AND REOPEN THE U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL AT BRATISLAVA. WITH REGARD TO FAMILY REUNIFICATION AND OTHER CSCE RELATED ACTIVITY, THE EMBASSY HAS HAD A MEASURE OF SUCCESS IN RECENT MONTHS, AFTER VIRTUALLY NO PROGRESS BETWEEN MAY AND DECEMBER, 1976. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT STEP TAKEN BY THE CZECHOSLOVAKS, ANNOUNCED TO US IN NOVEMBER, WAS AN

EVIDENTLY FIRM DECISION TO PERMIT SOME 20 CHILDREN TO REJOIN THEIR FAMILIES IN THE UNITED STATES. EMIGRATION APPROVAL HAS BEEN GIVEN TO 13 OF THESE CASES, AND MFA OFFICIALS INDICATE THE REMAINING SEVEN SHOULD BE SETTLED "SOON". THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR FURTHER PROGRESS ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES. AS FOR FINAL STEPS TO PUT THE CONSULAR CONVENTION INTO EFFECT AND REOPEN U.S. CONGEN BRATISLAVA, THE EMBASSY STILL SEES NO PROSPECT OF MAKING ANY HEADQAY UNTIL THE CLAIMS/GOLD ISSUE IS RESOLVED. ON THE ASSUMPTION IT REMAINS THE CLEAR INTENTION OF THE DEPARTMENT TO REOPEN BRATISLAVA, HOWEVER, WE CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN OUR PROPERTY THERE IN A STATE OF READINESS. IMMEDIATELY AFTER A CLAIMS/GOLD SETTLEMENT, WE RECOMMEND MOVING SWIFTLY AHEAD ON BOTH THE CONSULAR CONVENTION AND BRATISLAVA CONGEN REOPENING BY PRESSING FOR PROMPT GOC ACTION.

27. SECURITY QUESTIONS - SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS ARE OF OBVIOUS IMPORTANCE TO OUR LONGTERM OBJECTIVES OF WEAKENING SOVIET HEGEMONIC CONTROLS OVER CZECHOSLOVAKIA, ENCOURAGING GREATER ASSERTIONS

OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, AND BUILDING TIES WITH THE WEST. WITH UP TO 90,000 SOVIET TROOPS BROUGHT INTO CZECHOSLOVAKIA SINCE THE 1968 INTERVENTION AND THE SEEMING WILLINGNESS OF PRAGUE TO INTEGRATE CZECHOSLOVAK FORCES FIRMLY WITHIN THE WARSAW PACT, A CONSTANT IMPERATIVE OF THE EMBASSY DAO IS GATHERING INTELLIGENCE ON SOVIET AND CZECHOSLOVAK MILITARY INTENTIONS. THE OCTOBER 9176 RECIPROCAL US-GOC ELIMINATION OF TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON DIPLOMATS AND OTHER OFFICIALS HAS SUBSTANTIALLY FACILITATED THE DAO'S EFFORTS TO MONITOR MILITARY TRAINING AND OTHE OPERATIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. ACROSS THE BACKDROP OF ONGOING CSCE AND MBFR ACTIVITY, AS WELL AS CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SOVIET MILITARY BUILD-UP OF RECENT YEARS, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES IT IMPORTANT THAT THE DAO CONTINUE TO COORDINATE ITS REPORTING ACTIVITIS CLOSELY WITH OTHER SECTIONS OF THE EMBASSY--THE POLITICAL SECTION IN PARTICULAR. THIS COORDINATION HAS RECENTLY RESULTED IN SUGGESTION OF A POSSIBLE NEW CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURE FOR USE AT BELGRADE 77, AND IT WILL BE CONTINUED.

28. --CHARTING A POLITICAL COURSE- IN COPING WITH ALL THE AFOREMENTIONED ISSUES, WE BELIEVE SOME THOUGHT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO US-GOC POLITICAL RELATIONS PER SE OVER THE PERIOD STRETCHING INTO FY 1979. OUR OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE A PRUDENT STRENGTHENING OF THOSE RELATIONS, WHICH ARE PRESENTLY SO STRAINED IT WOULD SEEM THEY CAN ONLY IMPROVE. IN THE NEAREST TERM, THE STRAINS, PROVOKED MAINLY BY THE DEBATE OVER HUMAN RIGHTS AND HARASSMENT OF US JOURNALISTS MAY EVEN WORSEN, HOWEVER, FOR POSTPONEMENT OF THE SPRING 1977 VISIT TO WASHINGTON OF DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SPACIL WILL LIKELY ADD TO CURRENT POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES. IF THE BELGRADE 77 GATHERING BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO EAST-WEST DETENTE, ON THE OTHER HAND, THEN THE SPACIL VISIT MAY YET MATERIALIZE

LATER IN THE YEAR. BY THEN, AT LEAST FIRST STEPS MAY BE READY
ON SOME OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT AGENDA ITEMS--IF NOT
CLAIMS/GOLD, THEN PERHAPS NEGOTIATIONS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CULTURAL/SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES AGREEMENT. IF SO, WE MIGHT BE
ABLE TO MOVE AHEAD FROM WHAT IS PRESENTLY A HOLDING ACTION IN
OUR OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONS, TOWARD THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AT
LEAST SOME OF THE OBJECTIVES THE EMBASSY HAS SUGGESTED
ABOVE.
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